

“Orthoptera” (Charpentier); “Forest Insects” (Ratzenburg); “Dutch Expedition to Sumatra—Botany and Zoology;” “Acari, Myriopoda, et Scorpiones” (Berlessii); “Melances Orthopterologiques” (Saussure); “Catalogus Specierum Generis Scolia” (Saussure et Sichel); “Etudes sus les Vespides” (Saussure); “Illustrations of more than 1,000 Species of North-west European Ichneumonidæ, sensu Linnæano.” We also had the pleasure of seeing the plates which will be issued in illustration of part ii. of “Destructive Insects of Victoria,” the letterpress of which is in active course of preparation, as also the plates of a treatise on locusts, which will very shortly be in the hands of the public.

The whole visit gave the greatest pleasure to all those who took part in it, and the impression left was that the Government is doing a work of immense importance to the economic and commercial life of the colony in the support of such a department as this, and that they have chosen wisely in appointing as Director one who not only possesses the requisite knowledge, but who also brings to bear upon the work skill and energy which must, in the long run, rank the Victorian Entomological Department one of the foremost in Australia.

W. FIELDER.

EXCURSION TO CHELTENHAM.

ABOUT a dozen members took part in an excursion to Cheltenham on 5th September, avowedly for botanical purposes. In fact, two of them left the rest immediately, in order to look for birds' eggs, and have not since been heard of. Three others engaged in a more or less successful search for insects, while the remainder divided their attention between snakes and wild flowers. Of the former, two specimens were obtained; of the latter, a great many, but not of any particular value to the collector. It was hoped that *Hovea heterophylla* would be met with behind the Cheltenham cemetery, and a start was therefore made in that direction; but some never-to-be-sufficiently-execrated clearers had been before us, and had left no signs even of the plants. We therefore went on in a south-west direction, till we came near the beach road, discovering on the way *Polypompholyx tenella*, *Sprengelia incarnata*, and early specimens of most of the common spring orchids of the locality. For these, however, it was a few days too early. A council of war was held under some ti-tree scrub (for a heavy shower had come on), and resulted in a division of the party, half walking on to Sandringham along the coast, and the other half returning by a different route to Cheltenham, and so, in company with the patronizers of Mentone races, to Melbourne.

The two ornithologists who joined our party at Prince's Bridge station. accompanied us as far as Cheltenham; but as the inevitable gun formed a part of their equipment, their sudden disappearance must be put down to consideration for the feelings of the more nervous. Their course lay along the tramway track until the ti-tree scrub was reached, passing on the way several Sordid Wood Swallows whose conduct indicated that their nests were near. Superb Warblers, Black Fantails, and Australian Pipits were also noted, but as rain threatened, the friendly shelter of scrub proved acceptable. On viewing the Bay, Gannets, Bass's Straits Terns, and Silver Gulls were seen skimming over the water. Skirting the scrub for a short distance, the notes of the Pallid Cuckoo were heard. New Holland Honey-eaters were very plentiful on the Banksias, which, being in blossom, proved very attractive to them, and discoloured their plumage. Near the roadside, in a leaf of dead bracken fern, a *Sericornis* had built its nest and was rearing its brood. Here the little White-shafted Flycatcher, Robins, &c., were noted; while in the scrub Burmese Doves and Yellow-breasted Robins were heard. On the homeward track towards Sandringham, two Brush Wattle Birds were shot, and many others seen. A young Mountain Thrush next flitted across the road, accompanied by the parent bird, thus proving that although the months of October and November are regarded as the best ones for the oologist, many of our birds lay as early as the beginning of July. Pace had to be quickened now to catch the train after a pleasant but rather unsuccessful outing.

ORNITHOLOGICAL.

POLYTELIS ALEXANDRÆ, OR THE PRINCESS OF WALES PARRAKEET.

To the Editor of the Victorian Naturalist.

SIR,—With much pleasure I have read Mr. Augustus Forbes-Leith's letter regarding this bird, and I trust I shall be able to satisfy him that it is a distinct species and not a hybrid between *Polytelis melanura* (the Rock-Pebbler) and *P. barrabandi* (the Green Leek).

Since the date of my former letter, which was reprinted from the *South Australian Register* of 23rd August, 1890, into your February number, I have been informed by Mr. S. G. Hübbe, of our Civil Service, that he many years ago shot similar birds in the neighbourhood of the Hanson and Woodforde Rivers, and within the past few months Dr. E. C. Stirling, who accompanied our